

STATE OF IDAHO
Department of Fish and Game

Joseph C. Greenley, Director

Quarterly Project Progress Report
CLEARWATER RIVER DEVELOPMENT OF
SPRING CHINOOK STOCKS

Project No. 88E25030

Contract No. 03-6-208-00029

Period Covered: July 1, to September 30, 1975

Columbia River Fisheries Development Program

November, 1975

Clearwater River Development of Spring Chinook Stocks

ABSTRACT:

Sweetwater Eyeing Station received 2,363,392 green eggs from Rapid River Hatchery. All 2,126,077 eyed eggs from the station were planted at Indian Creek Channel.

Spawning ground surveys were completed with the South Fork Clearwater showing considerable improvement while the Selway River was substantially lower than expected.

All incubation channels were cleaned in preparation for receiving eyed eggs.

REPORT OF PROGRESS:

Indian Creek, Red River and Crooked River incubation channels were all cleaned of inorganic sedimentation. Both Red River and Crooked River Channels had excessive amounts of organic fines which could not be removed, and, though will be used this season, will need additional gravel and sand removal work next summer. The Department's dozer and channel rake were used at all channels this season and by traveling over the Elk City-Darby Road between channels this was more economical than hiring local personnel to do the work.

Rapid River Hatchery had excess chinook eggs to their needs which were sent to Sweetwater Eyeing Station. We received 993,000 green eggs on August 25th; 970,000 eggs on August 28th; and an additional 400,192 eggs on September 2nd. That gave a total of 2,363,392 green eggs from Rapid River from which the three women I hired as egg pickers removed 237,315 dead eggs. This gave a 90 percent eye-up which I considered good. The 2,126,077 eyed eggs from Sweetwater and an additional 280,659 eyed eggs from Rapid River were planted at Indian Creek Channel bringing the total there to 2,406,731 eyed eggs.

Eyed eggs from the Washington Department of Fisheries, Cowlitz Hatchery, were utilized in the other incubation channels which will be reported on next Quarter.

The only encouraging aspect of the chinook spawning ground surveys was on the tributaries of the South Fork Clearwater River. The redd count was up 333 percent; from 20 in 1974, to 66 in 1975. The most noticeable increase was in Crooked River where the trend count rose from 5 redds to 41.

Severe flooding in 1972 and 1974 eliminated a majority of the spawning gravels from the trend section on Crooked Fork. Since redd counts in the present area cannot realistically be correlated accurately to past redd counts, authorization has been received to re-establish the trend area between Rock Creek and the Cliff Hole. This would encompass the remaining spawning habitat of the prior survey section and include several good spawning areas above the old survey section.

The total Selway River drainage redd count was unexpectedly low. The redd count was 68 percent below the 1974 count which was itself considered low. Only 31 redds were observed in the whole Selway River trend sections. The eyed egg plants and natural reproduction from which adults would be returning in 1975 were consistent with other years and should not have been a major factor. Only two jacks were noticed which is not encouraging for next season.

Submitted by:

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